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Campfire Tales

The Soldier's Tear.

Upon the hill he turned
To take a last fond look
Of the valley and the village church,
And the cottage by the brook.
He listened to the sounds
So familiar to his ear;
And the soldier leaned upon his sword
And wiped away a tear.

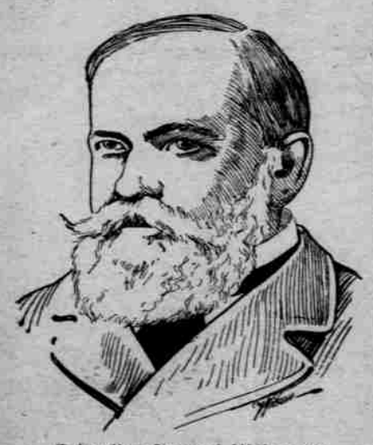
Beside that cottage porch
A girl was knelt in prayer;
She held aloft a snowy scarf,
Which fluttered in the air;
She breathed a prayer for him,
A prayer he could not hear;
But he paused to bluster as she knelt,
And wiped away a tear.

He turned and left the spot,
O, do not call him weak.
For dauntless was the soldier's heart
Though tears were on his cheek;
Go watch the foremost ranks
In danger's dark career.
Be sure the hand most daring there
Has wiped away a tear.

From Private to Brigadier-General.

Of all the enlisted men who went to the front from the state of Maine there was but one who entered the lists as a private and laid down his gun when peace was declared a full-fledged brigadier-general. That man was Frank S. Nickerson, whose valiant fighting through the many battles of the war was but characteristic of a Pine Tree Stater, and who still lives to tell of the ferocity with which the Northern and Southern armies fought at the Battle of Bull Run, Siege of New Orleans, Battle of Baton Rouge and other battles which hold equally as prominent places in the history of the United States.

In the battle of Baton Rouge, under Gen. Butler, Gen. Nickerson, then a colonel, fought valiantly. He was the senior officer on the field, Gen. Williams having been killed. Owing to the fierceness of the combat he was unable to take his position at the head, but was in the position he generally occupied as colonel. Gen. Butler did not overlook his good work in the battle, and mentioned him in his general orders.



Brigadier General Nickerson.

Shortly after this battle on Nov. 29, 1862, he was promoted to Brigadier-General. He continued in the service and was active at the siege of Port Hudson. He participated in many of the engagements of the Department of the Gulf. He returned to the North about May 13, 1865.

Stephen Douglas' Great Speech.

"The boys of 1861 are going fast," said the Major. "Nearly every morning there are names in the obituary columns of the newspapers whose owners were associated with events or incidents to which I held a personal, even if humble, relationship. There died last week a man who was, like myself, only one of a million soldiers, but I had reason to remember him, because in the first week of war he stood beside me in front of the old Nell house, in Columbus, Ohio, and heard that wonderful speech of Stephen A. Douglas, which was never reported, and yet gave courage to thousands of broken hearted and despairing men.

"It was about a week after Fort Sumter had been fired on, and Douglas was on his way to Chicago and Springfield to confer with his friends and supporters in Illinois. All men in political life had been stunned and outraged by the events of the last week, and they as well as the people who looked up to them as leaders turned hungrily to Douglas, hoping that he might say the right word, and yet fearing that he might say the wrong one. He came, half dressed, to the window of his unlighted bedroom, and, standing in the darkness, spoke to the crowd below.

"His deep voice rolled out from the darkness and fell like a benediction on the crowd standing with upturned faces in the street. Never had voice so thrilled me; never had mere words seemed so solemn and impressive as those spoken by Douglas that night.

"He said at once that a great crisis had come upon the country, and that all party and other questions must be pushed aside. He said slowly, as if weighing every word, 'The Union must be preserved, and the insurrection against the government must be crushed.' After the word crushed came a pause that gave emphasis to the phrase, and then, speaking as slowly as before, he pledged his hearty support to the Lincoln administration, and declared there was no other course open to the loyal citizen, who must stand by the government until national authority was everywhere recognized. Then, declining a reception, he closed his window and the crowd dispersed.

"There were in that crowd, standing within ten feet of my perch on the fence, one man who was to become President, four men who were to become major-generals in the Union army, a score of men who were, as brigadiers, to hold important commands, four men who were to become governors, three cabinet officers, and several hundred who were within three months to be carrying muskets in defense of the flag.

"Of all the most prominent men present on that evening not one is living now. Douglas, then spoken of as a possible lieutenant general, died within six weeks. Dennison, Garfield, Cox Tod, and others who lived to do great work, all are dead. I can place only one of the hundreds who heard Douglas speak in the dark in April, 1861. In the last year they have gone fast, but if any are left they should put on record their recollections of the incidents of that night."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

At Chickamauga.

Telling of a recent visit to the battlefield of Chickamauga, a writer in an eastern newspaper says:

"The Government boulevard marks on the crown of the hill the battle's line for eight miles; to the west an unprecedented view, to the east beautiful Southern homes, whose many-columned porches and frank hospitality prove the endurance of the old regime. Laughing children play where the battle stormed; earthworks have given place to green lawns and smiling terraces.

"Monument after monument, tablet after tablet marks the position of this brave regiment, of that valiant troop. Chattanooga in the distance, so long the plaything of contending armies, shows the smoke, not of cannons mouths, but of furnaces and factories. Lookout Mountain frowns upon the town. Orchard Knob, headquarters during the fight of Generals Grant Thomas and Gorden Granger, is literally covered with artistic monuments The winding river, the mountains each with a history, add to the variety and beauty of the drive.

"Leaving the site of the Ohio memorial one follows the boulevard past Bragg's headquarters. There stands the old cedar tree which sheltered the Confederate general, while he wrote and received dispatches, during the memorable engagement. There stands the triumphant tribute Illinois has raised to her soldiers brave. There stands the observation tower, where a marvelous view is caught.

"All along the road are the names of regiments and men who fought the 'Battle Without an Order.' In fancy one recreates the struggling force, the long, thin line of brave men in gray, the army of enthusiastic men in blue who went past all resistance to the summit, while Grant, at Orchard Knob, watched through field glasses the progress of the unexpected fray

Covered With Snow Blanket.

"The men of some companies in the old army," said a veteran, "called themselves 'destroying angels', and when it came to building fires or providing shelter they were. In the early spring of 1864 our brigade was twenty or thirty miles east of Chattanooga and with no expectation of severe weather the men lay down under blankets or the thin shelter tents, and during the night were literally snowed under. When reveille sounded the next morning there were six inches of snow on the ground. The camp looked like a cemetery, with its clusters and lines of little hillocks, and there was only one fire in the brigade, and that was at guard headquarters.

"As the men were roused from heavy sleep and threw out their arms to lift overcoat, cape or blanket from their faces the snow startled them to sitting or standing posture, and the scene was comical beyond any other I ever saw in the army. Those who had taken off their shoes could not find them. Many could not find their hats. All were chilled, but the boys laughed and swore by turns. Then they started to build fires, and while some cut down dead trees as big as saw logs, others tore down an old barn, and in half an hour dozens of big fires were going, coffee was boiling, breakfast was cooking, and with bodies warm the men were as frolic some as children."

LANDMARKS OF ALEXANDRIA

Quaint Little Virginian Town Contains Many Mementoes of the Highest Historical Interest.

Of all the interesting reminders of George Washington probably the least known and decidedly the least appreciated are to be found in the quaint little town of Alexandria, nestling on the banks of the Potomac a few miles below the national capital. In the days when Mount Vernon was the center of American heart interest and the site of the present city of Washington was but a broad expanse of green meadows Alexandria was a city of consequence and the capital of a social domain quite as brilliant in its way as that which now holds sway at the American seat of government.

George Washington always took the greatest interest in the welfare of the little city, whither he turned alike for supplies for his plantation and for the social diversions of which he was notoriously fond. The great cobblestones in Alexandria's streets were laid by the Hessian prisoners under Washington's directions. Here the Masonic lodge of which he was worshipful master held its festivities, here he came to Sunday services in old Christ's church, sitting with his family in the old square pew which yet bears the silver plate with the facsimile of his autograph, and here, finally, he came to indulge his proverbial fondness for dancing at the celebrated "birth night balls" instituted in his honor.

However, George Washington's connection with Alexandria dates back far beyond the time when he was feted here as the nation's hero. In this community of a by-gone age with its colonial doorways of the Georgian period, its Liverpool warehouses and mansions set close to the pavement are the records of young Washington's enlistment in the French and Indian war and indeed there is the old house in which Gen. Braddock held council of war with five colonial governors. At Alexandria, too, Washington voted for the candidates for the house of burgesses at a time when the air was filled with the first mutterings of the impending storm of revolt.

After Washington married and inherited Mount Vernon he greatly shocked the aristocratic society of Alexandria by sending his market cart to the city to dispose of the produce of his estate, but he endeared himself to the humbler portion of the community by his work in securing the erection of the first town pump. In his younger days he had been an enthusiastic member of the Alexandria volunteer fire company and assisted in extinguishing many a blaze. In 1775 he purchased, at a cost of $400, a small fire engine, and sent it to his fellow firemen in the little city on the Potomac.

Even the names of the streets in Alexandria are reminiscent of the old regime, the principal thoroughfares rejoicing in the names of King, Washington, Princess, Duke, St. Asaph, Pitt and Fairfax. There may yet be viewed the Lowrason or Smoot house, where Lafayette and his suite were quartered when the distinguished Frenchman was so royally entertained upon the occasion of his visit to Alexandria in 1825, and on King street is the Marshall house, where Col. Ellsworth of the New York zouaves paid the penalty of his life for tearing down a Confederate flag—one of the most dramatic incidents of the civil war.

Even the houses which have no particular historical association are so strange as to give the visitors the impression that he has suddenly been set down in a foreign land in another country. Rich carving ornaments the staircases; there are quaint old porticos. Century old walled-in gardens contribute an air of mystery, heightened by damp courtyards and sepulchral wine vaults, and, finally, stately mahogany furniture, treasures in old china and somber old family portraits aid in carrying out the impression. For all that did it not happen to be on the road from Washington to Mount Vernon it is likely that Alexandria would be almost entirely neglected by the modern tourist.

The most interesting place in Alexandria, however, is the old Christ church, where Washington and Lee worshiped. There among the trees it stands, simple and unadorned in its architecture, and, with its old red brick walls and stately steeple, it looms up as a monument to the past. The north side of the building is almost entirely covered with ivy. To the left of the church stretches the churchyard, with its solemn tombstones, a century old, standing like sentinels guarding the last earthly resting places of the dead forefathers.

That Washington was faithful in his attendance at the meetings of his church is conclusively shown by the diary kept by himself, some of the entries in which are as follows:

"1760, Feb. 9, Rev. C. Green dined at Mount Vernon.

"1768, May 8, went to church from Colonel Bassett's.

"1768, June 5, to church at Alexandria, dined at Colonel Carlyle's.

"1768, July 10, vestry meeting.

"1768, Sept. 9, vestry meeting at the new church, dined at Carlyle's.

"1769, April, church from Eltham and dined with Colonel Daingerfield at the pastor's.

"1773, May 3, to Alexandria with Nellie Calvert.

"1774, June 24, to church at Alexandria.

"1785, Sept. 15, sent my chariot to Alexandria for Miss Sally Ramsey and Kitty Thompson, to be bridesmaids for Fanny Bassett. Rev. Dr. Griffith and Rev. Dr. Grayson came to dinner. After the candles were lighted George A. Washington and Miss Bassett were married by Rev. Dr. Grayson.

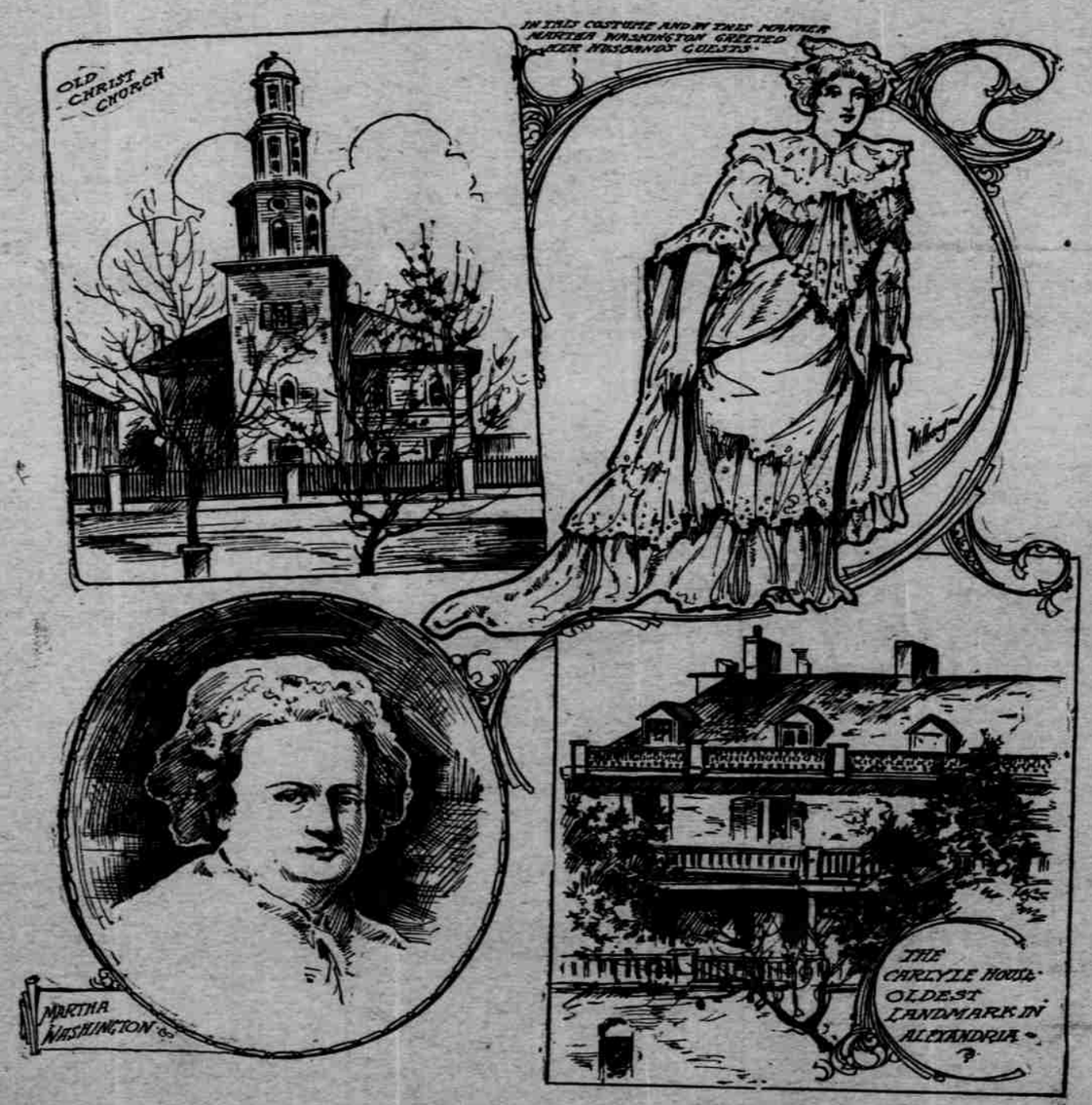
"1788, Nov. 4, Mr. Herbert and lady, Mr. Potts and lady, Gen. Lee and lady dined here, with Count Mostier and the Marchioness of De Bretan."

In 1766 the vestry ordered a levy of 31,180 pounds of tobacco to be made upon the people of the parish for the purpose of building a new church at Alexandria, for which the ground was donated by Charles Alexander. The church was built for £600 by James Parsons, in accordance with plans drawn by an architect named Wren. On the day of acceptance ten pews were offered for sale, and No. 5 was purchased by Col. George Washington for £36 10s, being the highest price paid.

The woodwork and walls are white, which seems to add to the surroundings a charming air of purity and simplicity. There is the altar, with its heavy canopy, on each side of which are large panels containing the original doctrines of the church printed in bold, old-fashioned letters. Directly by Charles Alexander. To the left of the font is the reading pulpit. In the wall on each side of the chancel are set tablets. The one to the left is inscribed "To the Memory of George Washington," and the one to the right "To the Memory of Robert E. Lee." In the middle of the room hangs an elaborate chandelier which was presented to the church in 1785 by Washington; it was made for candles, they being used for illuminating until 1852.

Over on the left side of the church is the pew which Washington bought for £36 10s. It is a high box, about five by eight feet in dimensions, and has straight-backed seats on three sides. All the pews were originally this size, but owing to an increasing congregation it was found necessary to divide each pew into two, Washington's alone being left as it was. On the door of No. 5 is a little plate inscribed with a facsimile of Washington's signature. The pew is now used by Lawrence Washington, a great-grand nephew of the general and one of the present vestrymen. He was, by the way, the first white male child born in the mansion at Mount Vernon.

Across the aisle from Washington's pew is No. 46, which was owned and used by Robert E. Lee. Lee was a vestryman of the church at the time the civil war broke out. The pew also bears a plate with a facsimile of the owner's signature.



WILL NOT HAVE CIGARETTES.

"Paper Pipes" Are Barred from Statesmen's Smoking Room.

Probably the most sumptuous smoking rooms in this country are those which the government has provided for the members of the House of Representatives' hall. The chairs are luxurious affairs, upholstered in buff leather, while the couches and sofas are of the same material. The rugs and pictures are as fine as those found in any of the public buildings and here the members retire and smoke and gossip and yet are able to keep track of what is going on in the House through the wide, swinging glass doors. There is but one rule in the smoking rooms, and it applies to that used by the Democrats as well as that of the Republicans. It hangs in the center of the wall of each and reads: "Strangers and cigarettes not permitted in this room." The rule is religiously obeyed, although nobody seems to know who first promulgated it. The most atrocious cabbage cigar is permitted to exhaust itself, but the finest Turkish cigarette is not tolerated for an instant. Recently Congressman Joy of Missouri, who is a confirmed consumer of paper pipes, inadvertently lighted one in the Republican smoking room. Before he had taken a second whiff several of the members ordered an assistant sergeant-at-arms to read the rules to him. Mr. Joy dropped his cigarette and made his way to the House restaurant, where everything goes.

THE WISDOM OF PETER.

Probably End of the Honeymoon Had Arrived for Him.

A clergyman was sitting in his study one evening hard at work on the following Sunday's sermon when a visitor was announced. She was a hard, muscular-looking woman, and when the minister set a chair for her she said, somewhat brusquely:

"You are Mr. J——, ain't you?"

"I am," replied the clergyman.

"Well, maybe you'll remember o' marryin' a couple o' strangers at your church a month ago?"

The clergyman referred to his diary for a moment and then said:

"What were the names?"

"Peter Simpson and Eliza Brown," replied the woman, adding, "and I'm Eliza."

"Are you, indeed?" said the minister. "I thought I remem——"

"Yes," interrupted the visitor. "I'm her, and I thought I'd drop in and tell you that Peter's escaped!"

A Familiar Face.

The genial bishop of New York and the most famous of English-speaking actors doubtless have already much in common with one another. Were there nothing else, however, they have both been victims of a similar misunderstanding of a kind which is peculiarly the product of the twentieth century fame. Every one is familiar with the story of Henry Irving, arrested in his walk down the main street of a small English town by the earnest gaze of a small girl and of her triumphant answer to his pleasant remark. "You seem to recognize my face, my little maid." "Yes, sir; you're one of Grandgrind's pills!"

Bishop Potter had nearly the same luck when traveling some years ago in Minnesota. He noticed a fellow tourist, while waiting on a railway platform, eyeing him with great curiosity. "Excuse me, mister," he was eventually asked, "but I think I've seen your pictures in the papers "Probably," admitted the bishop. "Kin I ask," continued the fellow traveler, edging nearer, "what you was cured of?"

Where Revolt Is Chronic.

Ever since Bolivar, in 1810, set in motion the revolution that, eighteen years later, severed the sovereignty of Spain from the continent of South America, Venezuela has been in a state of revolt until it has become chronic and incurable by any internal movement. Even after Bolivar had driven out the Spanish forces and had created the republic of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru as states forming it, Venezuela rose in revolt against him and Peru broke off the connection. Bolivar had visited the United States and studied our form of government, but the Latin showed in his proposal that the constitution of the republic of Colombia should make its presidency a life tenure, with power in the incumbent to name his successor. After his death the republic fell apart, and its component states set up individual sovereignty.

Since then there has been no government as we understand it.

The Prevalence of Accidents.

Among any 100,000 people, 15,000 experience during the year an accidental injury of some kind severe enough to cause a claim on an accident policy.

French Legion of Honor.

The French Legion of Honor has 37,190 chevaliers, 5,990 officers, 1,059 commanders, 218 grand officers, and 55 Grand Croix.